



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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Sermons of Dr. S. Lewis Johnson

Divine Purpose

TRANSCRIPT

Structure of Dispensational Theology (6):

Distinctive Features: Law and Grace - I

[Prayer] Father we again give Thee thanks and praise for the ministry of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to us. We thank Thee for the privilege of the study of the Scriptures. May they lead us into a deeper understanding of Thee and of the plans and purposes that Thou hast for us. We commit this hour to Thee. We ask Thy blessing upon each one present. May we all profit from our time together and be edified as we look into the word of God.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

[Message] One of the things that I think in a lengthy study like this that we forget is what we are really trying to do and if we forget what we are trying to do then the studies that we are giving will not be seen in their proper perspective. Let me just remind you again of what we have done so far and what we are hoping to do. We are hoping and we are trying to compare different approaches to the study of the Plan of the Ages. And we are hoping, ultimately, to if possible come to some kind of solution of some of the problems that we see as we look at different approaches. And we have centered our attention upon the distinction between Covenant Theology and Dispensational Theology

for they represent two attempts to set out the Divine Plan of the Ages. We began with a history of Covenant Theology then we looked at the three covenants that generally structure Covenantal Theology: The covenant of redemption, the covenant made between the persons of the Trinity in ages past before the creation, each of the members of the Trinity having a specific path to perform. We didn't say anything about the kind of covenant it was but it was a conditional covenant in the sense that we have three of divine persons who covenant to do certain things, and they do it not out of grace but out of obedience to their own purpose and mind.

We then looked at the covenant of works; the covenant made between Adam and God. I guess we should say between God and Adam because God is the one who initiated this covenant in the Garden of Eden. That was a conditional covenant and, of course, as we know through reading through the Bible Adam failed to carry out the requirements and responsibilities of that covenant. Then we discussed the covenant of grace the covenant made between Our Lord and the elect or some like to say between the Divine Trinity and the elect. Actually there is not a whole lot of difference between those two constructions of it because, essentially, it is a covenant, an unconditional covenant, depending upon the faithfulness of God to his word by which on the basis of his sovereign unconditional election, he has determined that a certain people come, ultimately, to know him. We discussed the covenant of works, the covenant of grace in the light of that.

Now, that was a review of Covenantal Theology and then we launched into the discussion of Dispensational Theology in order to give you that perspective. We discussed the history of Dispensational Theology contrasting it and comparing it with Covenant Theology history. Covenant Theology is a slightly older approach to the plan of the ages; Dispensational Theology more recent. Dispensational Theology being approximately one hundred and fifty years of age having its beginning probably with John Nelson Darby and the time around eighteen thirty. Covenant Theology may be traced

back to the seventeenth century but, actually, not as far back as the reformers themselves. So both of them are relatively modern constructions of the Divine Plan of the Ages. Then we launched into the discussion of the structure of Dispensational Theology. We devoted one time to the dispensations setting out the normal way in which the usual way in which dispensationalists conceive of their dispensation. We talked to lay stress on the fact that in Dispensational Theology what we are looking at is the history of salvation but the emphasis is upon the manward side of things; the test to which God puts man, his failure, and then the Messianic promises that are given together with the judgments that falls upon man as a result of failure of the test. In Covenantal Theology the stress rests upon the divine side of things and in a lot of way this is one of the reasons that these approaches are quite different.

And then we discussed the Hermeneutic or the principle of interpretation that dispensationalists like to follow and essentially in which covenant theologians also follow with one or two exceptions. That is, one should interpret the Bible according to the grammatical, historical method of interpretation. That is, we should look at words in their normal usage and we should pay attention to grammar and syntax as we do in the interpretation of any book of literature.

The only thing that we should say with reference to the study of the Bible that is different from the study of secular work is that we recognize that there is such a thing as the illumination of the Holy Spirit. The Bible is a book with a dual authorship. The principle author is God, but he has used human instrumentality in the writing of the word of God. We laid stress also upon the fact that covenant theologians like to think that as a result of grammatical, historical, theological method of interpretation it is legitimate to practice the principle of spiritualizing. We didn't say a whole lot about that but we did try to get to use one illustration of it. Passages in which the Old Testament, for example, the nation Israel is referred to which in the New Testament Covenant theologians claim or contend refer to the church of Jesus Christ.

Now, they support their interpretation by this simple method. They say if you look at the way the New Testament uses the Old Testament you will see that is the way the apostles used the Old Testament and so really we are following the apostolic method of interpretation. Now, dispensationalists would say, essentially, the same thing. He would just deny that there is such a thing as spiritualizing. And I tried to say and if I didn't say it clearly I'll say it again that this issue is a very important issue but what it comes down to, essentially, is the interpretation of specific passages. And so if by interpreting specific passages you can show that the New Testament writers did take passages that in the Old Testament were clearly passages having to do with the nation Israel in the ethnic sense and in the New Testament are referred to the church of Jesus Christ then you would have some justification for the method of spiritualization. If, on the other hand, you cannot show that from the exegesis of the New Testament then you should abandon spiritualizing.

Then in our last study or our last two studies, we devoted attention to another distinctive of Dispensational Theology and that is the relationship of Israel and the church. And I tried to point out that, so far as I can tell as well as Dispensationalists can tell, that the New Testament and the Old Testament recognizes a clear distinction between ethnic Israel and the church of Jesus Christ and that it is really improper to speak of the church as Israel.

Now, a person may say the church is the new Israel, but if a person were to use that kind of language what he would simply be saying is that there is a typical relationship between the church and Israel. Israel being the ancient ethnic, spiritual people of God and the church the spiritual people of God in the present day and that there is a relationship between them for they share, essentially, in the spiritual blessings that God gives to the redeemed. So those are some ways in which one might point out the distinctions as well as the similarities.

Now, let us remember as we come to our subject tonight that we are not trying to settle all of these questions at this point. Obviously, if you have listened to me carefully you will probably notice that I favor some features of one particular system and I may favor myself some features of another particular system, but the purpose of our study is to acquaint you with they believed; that is the two approaches what covenant theologians believed and what Dispensationalists theologians believe and then later on when we come to try set up a, what I would call, a bit more of the biblical approach that is my own approach then I will try to make some decisions one way or the other with regard to some of these things very plainly.

But we are looking then at the structure of Dispensational Theology and tonight our subject is Law and Grace. Now, the reason this is one of our topics is simply this that, I think, that if you study Covenantal Theology and you study Dispensational Theology you will notice that characteristic of these two systems is a difference of viewpoint concerning the relationship of the Christian today to the Law as a general rule. Now, remember I've been saying this over and over again I hope the time will come when I don't have to say this, but there is always someone who comes in who hasn't been here previously and I always think well if I don't say it they will go out with some wrong impression. There are differences of opinion in both of these systems of approach to the word of God. In other words Dispensationalists differ among themselves on a number of points and Covenant Theologians differ among themselves on a number of points and occasionally the differences between the two narrow down considerably in other times they are very wide. But with that in mind I will say that generally speaking, covenant theologians tend to place a much greater importance upon the relationship of the Christian today to the Mosaic Law. In fact, some of them contend that we are under the Mosaic Law today, not as a means of salvation but as a very, very important normative standard for Christian living. On the other hand, as a general rule Dispensationalists believe that we are not under the law as a code; that is the law as law. But, of course,

most of them would hasten to point out that doesn't mean that we are not under at least as high a moral standard and some of those things will come out as we talk. But the important point is for us to remember what we are thinking about is the Dispensational approach and the Covenantal approach and with that in mind then we turn to our subject tonight and I hope that you have the outline before you. And we'll first of all begin with a word of introduction and we'll talk about why dispensationalists must handle the subject for a moment.

Now, it's necessary for Dispensationalists to deal with the question of the relationship between the Mosaic Law and the principle of grace because in their scheme of things one dispensation is called the Dispensation of Law and another is called the Dispensation of Grace or better the church, but often called the Dispensation of Grace. So the question naturally arises what is the relationship between Law and Grace. So if you have a system by which you say there are two ages, one is called Age of the Law and the other is the Age of Grace or the Age of the church then these questions immediately come to mind. Are there two different ways of salvation? In other words, we know we are saved by grace at the present day are we suggesting that because there is such a thing as the Age of the Law, that is a dispensationalist might ask this question, are you suggesting that there was period of time when we were saved by keeping the Mosaic Law? Or someone else might say, “Well if you call the present age today the Age of Grace, are you suggesting that there is no grace in the days in the Age of the Law?” So these are natural questions that arise and so a person who is expounding dispensationalism must have something to say about that.

Further, as you look at the different approaches that have been given to this subject in the past there have been a number of unguarded statements. Unguarded statements made by the Dispensationalists and occasionally an unguarded statement or so made by a covenant theologian as well. For example, Mr. Scofield in the Scofield Reference Bible not in the new edition it has been corrected because of the fact that this unguarded statement was

made in the Scofield Reference Bible on John chapter 1, he made a famous statement. It's famous because his enemies picked it up and criticized him so strongly for it this is what he said, “The point of testing is no longer legal obedience as the condition of salvation but acceptance or rejection of Christ.” Now if you'll listen to that statement again, “The point of testing is no longer legal obedience as the condition of salvation but acceptance or rejection of Christ.” You can see how someone reading this can say, “well, evidently, Mr. Scofield believed that in the Old Testament times one was saved by keeping the law.” That seems to be plainly the point; “The point of testing is no longer legal obedience as the condition of salvation.” I think, any fair reading would come to that conclusion.

Now, of course, if you read all of Mr. Scofield's notes which critics often don't do on either side of issues like this; they tend to want to pick out something that someone has said on the opposing side and criticize. You would have found a number of places where Mr. Scofield makes the point that no one was ever saved by anything but faith in Christ. Further, many other statements made by others on the other side have been capable of misunderstanding too and sometimes those that criticize Mr. Scofield very strongly found themselves criticized for the same thing. For example, Oswald T. Allis, a Presbyterian minister, whom I knew who wrote the book called “Prophecy and the church,” which was an attack on dispensationalism and, particularly, on eschatology and dispensationalism. He criticized Mr. Scofield for making that statement but forgot that in his own work he had this sentence “the law is a declaration of the will of God for man's salvation.” So the very thing for which he criticized Mr. Scofield, he, himself, did in another part of his book. Now, he goes on to explain what he was talking about but the point is that that text taken out of its context said exactly the same thing that Mr. Scofield said. Strictly speaking, neither one of them meant what the line or the sentences meant. Controversies over the relationship of law and grace are characteristic of all of Christian ages and if you'll just think for a moment of the early church you'll realize that one of the great questions that stirred up the early church was the question of the relationship of the

Law to the New Testament believer. For example, in Acts chapter 15, and the so called Jerusalem Conference, there the issue was the relationship between the principle of grace and law, that is, the requirement for circumcision. Now, if you read the rest of the Pauline Epistles and even aside from Paul you will find that that was one of the big issues between those who were on the fringes of Christianity and those who were part of it and even between those who were in Christianity that was an issue of some significance. That's why Paul had to write the Epistle to the Romans, the Epistle to the Galatians. That's why he had to write sections of 2 Corinthians. It's why the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews had to write his epistle as well. So almost all of the New Testament epistles, at one point or another, touch on this relationship of law and grace. So when we turn to a subject like this we are turning to something that's been a great subject of controversy among Christians from the days of the early church to the present time.

Well, now, let's look at our outline. We are going to just cover about half of it tonight maybe even only a third of it. Roman I, Grace and the Mosaic Law and Capital A, the Relationship of the Mosaic Law to Grace.

The impression might easily be given by the progress of the dispensational scheme since promise was succeeded by law that a retrogression in God's plan took place when God gave the Mosaic Law to the Children of Israel at Mt. Sinai for a reflect for a moment. In the dispensational scheme we have the Age of Innocence, the Age of Conscious, the Age of Human Government, the Age of Promise, and then we have the Age of Law. Now, when we read the New Testament the Apostle Paul will make very plain in Galatians 3, specifically, that believers today are the heirs of Abraham. Now, Abraham was given promises. Abraham didn't know anything about the Mosaic Law. So does it not seem to be a kind of retrogression for God to give the law at Mt. Sinai after he has already given those gracious promises to Abraham? You can see, immediately, how someone might think that a retrogression has taken place in God's plan. In fact, it's so obviously necessary to say something about it that that's why Paul has to

say something about in Galatians chapter 3. He has point out that the Law which came four hundred years later does not cancel the promises that were made to Abraham because someone might think that they had. So then it's natural to ask the question is there any retrogression?

Professor Louis Berkhof, a very fine covenant theologian, when he comes to discuss the Age of the Mosaic Law he, himself, must say that the promise that was given to Abraham and the grace that is a part of that, to use his words, “somewhat eclipsed by the giving of the Mosaic Law.” He says the “Sinaitic Covenant is an interlude.” Now, that's an interesting statement and, as a matter of fact, I think, it is a very good statement. I only am surprised that Professor Berkhof can say that the Sinaitic Covenant is an interlude because later on in his theology he makes a great deal over the fact that believers today are under the Mosaic Law. So even he concedes that there is something that at first seems out of order to be given the great Abrahamic promises, the great promises, and then four hundred years later for the nation to be put under the Mosaic Law that does seem or might seem to be retrogression.

Professor Berkhof goes on to say with reference to the Abrahamic Covenant and the covenant with Abraham, on the other hand, the promise and the faith that responds to the promise are made emphatic. So he saw some problem in connection with that.

Another man, a very good friend of mine a covenant theologian whom I hardly regard Mr. Palmer Robinson. Dr. Robinson while contending that the Law is an event but over the Abrahamic Covenant promise admits that the law “simply becomes predominant under Moses.” I think you can say that this is for some covenant theologians a bit of an embarrassment that we have the marvelous gracious promises given to Abraham but then four hundred years later we have Israel put under the Mosaic Law. So we have to ask ourselves what is suggested by that.

Well, the Apostle Paul has something to say about it. Now, if you have the New Testament to show you that this is of course a question that the early church wrestled

with a bit as well turn to Galatians chapter 3. In Galatians chapter 3, the apostle is discussing some of these things and so along about verse 17, he says, “And this I say that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the Law which was four hundred and thirty years after cannot differ now that it should make the promise of non effect.” In other words the Law does not cancel the Abrahamic promises. “For if the inheritance be of the law it is no more a promise but God gave it to Abraham by promise, therefore, then service the Law.” So you see that raises the question if we have the promises given to Abraham and then four hundred years later we have the Mosaic Law given and if the inheritance should be considered to be of law then it is not a promise but yet God gave it to Abraham by promise, what’s the purpose of the giving of the Law? It’s a natural question why did God give the Law? So Paul says in verse 19, “It was added because of transgressions till the seed should come to whom the promise was made and it was ordained by angels in the hands of the mediator.” So it’s not then a new question for us to ask why then did God give the Mosaic Law? Strictly speaking in this passage he’s quoted from the Law about six times, yet, he says it doesn’t say what its significance then?

Now, this became a matter of debate between the Lutherans and the Calvinists or between the Lutheran side of the Reformation and the Calvinistic side of the Reformation. Incidentally, when we talk about Reformation that’s largely what we are talking about the Lutheran and the Calvinists and they both believed in the bondage of the will. But, at any rate, they differed over what is the purpose of the Law? For example, the Lutheran’s claim that the Law had two uses. They spoke of the political use of the Law; that is the Law is a faithful guide in civil righteousness; that is government should be guided by the Mosaic Law. What we have in the Mosaic Law, a great moral principle. And so this “*usis politica*” to use the Latin terminology that was a legitimate use of the Law. We should be guided by that in our principles of faith. And then secondly, the Lutherans spoke about a “*usis pedagogicus*” which meant a pedagogical use or to spell it out what they meant by

that was, essentially, that the Law was given to bring men to the conviction of sin that they then might turn to Christ in order to be saved by grace.

So these two uses of the Law, the Lutherans thought were important; political use, pedagogical use or use as a guide for civil matters in states, and secondly and principally, to bring men to the conviction of their sins that they might then be ready to respond to the grace of God through coming and the ministry, particularly, the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. In fact, the Lutherans laid great stress on the fact that when you preach the gospel you should always preach the Law first. So you preach the Law and then you preach the gospel. You preach the Law in order to bring men under conviction then you preach the gospel in order that they might find relief in the mercy and grace of the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, that's that a bad construction of things. The question is, is it complete? If you are looking for a passages that might suggest the political use of the Law turn to 1 Timothy chapter 1, and here the Apostle Paul writing to Timothy his apostolic legate says in verse 8 of chapter 1, “But we know that the Law is good if a man use it lawfully knowing this; that the Law is not made for a righteous man but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for man slayers, for whoremongers, for them that defoul themselves with mankind and for men stealers, for liars, for purged persons and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine.” So what Paul is saying is the Law is given for the unsaved that would be what Luther would call and the Lutherans the “*usis politica*” that is it's the means by which sin is restrained in our society. And one cannot help but think that if our society were amenable to the principles of the Law of Moses, there would be lots of things in our modern society that would not have the free manifestation that they have today. In other words, there would be tremendous restraint on the out breaking of sin in our society if we made an attempt legally to follow the righteousness that is found in the Law of Moses.

Now, so far as the pedagogical use of the Law turn to Galatians, chapter 3, again we'll just read verse 24, as one of the many texts which have to do with this. In the 24th verse we read, “Wherefore the Law was our school master to bring us unto Christ that we might be justified by faith.” And so the apostle states, “We were put under the Law at Mt. Sinai in order to bring us to the conviction of our sins that when the Messiah came we might be urged and led to faith in him and a faith that saved.”

Now, the Calvinists or the reformed side of the Reformation went on and added a third use of the Law and the Lutherans and the Calvinists disagreed over this. The Lutherans as a general rule did not accept this use of the Law. Now, this new use has been called the *usus normatia* or putting it in English, the normative use of the Law; that is the use of the Law for guidance in Christian living. Now, that the fact that it is the third use of the Law according to the Calvinist or according to the reformed side, it came to be spoken of as the third use of the Law and sometimes just as the third use of the Law, and most people if you are like I am you don't want to reveal that you are ignorant when somebody starts a discussion over the third use of the Law but you really want to say to someone what is the third use of the Law? What are they talking about? Well the third use of the Law is the normative use and the Lutherans did not believe that we were under the Law as a code. But the Calvinists tend to put their believers under the Law. So in this the reformers differed and the Lutherans stood on the side of two uses of the Law, the Calvinists on the other side with three uses of the law.

Well, what are the purposes of the Law? Paul asks the question in verse 9, “Wherefore then service the Law.” I'd like to just set out some of the things that the New Testament says about the purposes of the Law. Why did God give the Law? Well, first of all, he says in verse 19, it was added because of transgression. Now, when he says it was added, he means it was not primary in his dealings with men it was as Professor Berkhof said an “interlude,” that is the Law was never intended to be anything but temporary.

And Professor Berkhof by using the expression an “interlude” is, I think, expressing what is strictly speaking biblical teaching.

Now, at this point, I am going to diverge a bit not in my notes though I may repeat it later on but, I think, it would be proper at this point to mention it. When I went through theological seminary the man who taught me Systematic Theology was Lewis Sperry Chafer a very godly man. He was a self-taught theologian, a man of faith. He did not have the benefit of training over a period of time in a theological seminary until often the issues that were theological issues he wasn't altogether acquainted with them but he had one great advantage that theologians often don't have and that is he had been a Bible teacher for many, many years. And so many of the things that he may not have known theologically he had a good grasp of expositoryly. Well, Dr. Chafer if anything was a man who not only was a dispensational theologian but his dispensationalism tended to ultra dispensationalism. He was not an ultra dispensationalist but he tended that way. He would make some statements that were very strong statements like, “the New Testament begins with the Gospel of John.” Now what he meant by that was that the first three gospels are written from the standpoint of the nation Israel being under the Law of Moses and most of the instruction of Matthew, Mark, and Luke is instruction given by our Lord living under the Mosaic Covenant. Now, he was right about that. And that's why when the Lord Jesus healed the leper what did he say he said go and perform the sacrifices that Moses required according to the Book of Numbers, chapter 13, oh Leviticus, chapter 13 and 14. In other words, our Lord lived under the Law. He lived under the Law even to his death. And, in fact, the last Passover was the only Passover, probably, that was ever perfectly performed and our Lord did it.

I like what Professor Shilder a reformed theologian, incidentally, says about it that when our Lord carried out that last Passover and first Lord's Supper, there was not absolutely nothing in the observance of it that was contrary to Moses. He said the most fastidious Pharisee and Sadducee and an eager angel, I think that is his exact term, an

eager angel could find nothing wrong with the way that Christ observed the Passover. He observed it perfectly in accordance with the Mosaic Law. He lived his life perfectly under the Mosaic Law. His teaching was also giving under the Mosaic Law.

Now, something often forgotten and unfortunate leads to confusion in the reading of the Bible. And as you know when he died the veil of the temple was rent in twain from top to bottom signifying the passing away of the Mosaic Law. Specifically in that case all of the ceremonial features of that law came to an end at that time. Now, Dr. Chafer used like to say that “the present age is an intercalation.” Now, that is a strange term isn't it. I'm sure most of us wouldn't be able to define exactly what an intercalation is. In fact, when Dr. Chafer used it with us we knew it was important but most of us didn't know what in the world he was talking about so we rushed out and got a Webster's dictionary and looked up that word. Dr. Chafer used to say, “I've searched for a long time; I searched and searched but for some word that would indicate how the church is something that begins absolutely, freshly on the Day of Pentecost and comes to its conclusion with the Rapture of the church, which has no relationship to what precedes and no relationship with what follows.” And so, finally, he said, “to express this period of time I found the term intercalation.”

Now, I've often thought what can you illustrate intercalation with? I think, I found the perfect illustration, halftime in a football game. Halftime in a football game has nothing to do with what happens in the first half of football and nothing to do with what happens in the last half of the football game. When the band comes marching on to play and all of the girls come out and do their dancing or whatever they may be doing at halftime, it has nothing to do with that football game. Well that's an intercalation, that period of time, that twenty minutes or fifteen minutes or whatever it is that is between the two halves. Now, Dr. Chafer believed that about the church Age. He felt that the church Age began on the Day of Pentecost and came to an end with the Rapture of the church and there was practically no connection. I don't even remember his saying there was any

connection. The fact that he said intercalation would indicate he didn't believe there was any connection. But, at any rate, that was his general viewpoint.

Now, I'd like to suggest that that's wrong. That really intercalation is not a bad term but he applied it to the wrong age. He applied it to the Age of the church. It should have been applied to the Age of the Law. It's quite obvious that what began on the day of the giving of the Law on Mt. Sinai came to an end at the time our Lord suffered on the Cross. The intercalation is that period of time. And strictly speaking Professor Berkoff who wouldn't agree with Doctor Chafer on many of these points, calling it an interlude comes very close to calling in an intercalation, an interlude. So in that sense then the Legal Age is to be understood as an intercalation, an interlude. Because you see when we are saved today our salvation is not linked with Moses our salvation is linked with Abraham. We become children of Abraham by faith, not children of Moses, children of Abraham. So the Christian church in the present day is related to Abraham not Moses. And, furthermore, I say one other thing, not in my notes either. This is the fundamental reason why Israel today is out of harmony with the plan of God. The children of Israel today revere Moses more than they revere Abraham. If they revered Abraham more than Moses then there would be much more likelihood of them understanding that the way to be in relationship with the Lord God is the way of grace and not the way of Law.

So we were talking about the purpose of the Law. The Law was added because of transgression. It was added because it was not primary in the dealing of God. The primary dealing is that which began with Abraham when the promises were given. But the Law was given to bring the sense of conviction as he says added because of transgression since the Messiah would be coming.

Now, furthermore, the Law was also given for the ungodly. Now, we have referred to that in 1 Timothy chapter 1, verses 9 and 10, so there is no need to say anything more about it except to say that, I think, that lying back of that statement the Law is given for the ungodly and not for the godly, lying back of that is restraint of sin.

In other words, the Law was given to restrain the manifestation of sin. Thirdly, the Law was given to men to bring men specifically to the knowledge of sin. Romans chapter 3 in verse 20, I'll read this passage for you if you have your Bible you may turn quickly there to Romans chapter 3 in verse 20, this is what the apostle states here, “Therefore by the deeds of the Law there shall be no flesh be justified in his sight for by the Law is the knowledge of sin.” So not only is the Law given to restrain sin generally among men but the Law was given to bring men to the knowledge of sin.

Further and in the same general type of thing the Law was given to show the terrible nature of sin. Romans chapter 7, verse 8 through verse 13, just let's just turn over a page or two and we'll read these verses. Paul says, “But sin taking occasion through the commandments wrought in me all manner of concupiscence for without the Law sin was dead. For I was alive without the Law at one time but when the commandments came sin revived and I died and the commandment which was ordained to life I found to be unto death. For sin taking occasion by the commandments deceived me and by it slew me wherefore for the Law is holy and the commandments holy and just and good was then that which is good made death unto me, God forbid. But sin that it might appear sin working death in me by that which is good that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.” So sin takes occasion by the commandments and works in Paul he says, “all manner of concupiscence.”

There is no contradiction, incidentally, between the purposes of restraint of sin and revelation of sin. The Law has at least two elements and two effects; one the command, the other the penalty producing both internal and external effects. Internally, it stimulates the sin nature to further rebellion.

You ever notice that? Well, if you are as old as I am and you had children and grandchildren you can see that working on the faith of individuals. Tell a child not to do something and often that's the one thing they want to do. Some of you are smiling

you've had children. The rest of you puzzled or maybe some of you are hiding because you didn't have children like my children. But, nevertheless, I think, that is generally true.

Internally it stimulates the sin nature of the further rebellion but the penalty restrains the outward act. So you find a lot of people that you will say to them “do not do this” at least down within they want to do it, now, a whole lot more but they think the switch or the belt or some other penalty will result and so the rebellion is kept within.

Another thing, it is stated in the New Testament that the Law reveals the vast number of our sins. You can see how much the Law is related to sin. Look at Romans 5:20, Paul says, “Moreover the Law entered that the offense might abound” think of that. God gave the Law that the offense against the Law might abound. In other words, God gave the Law to show us the vast number of our sins not simply one but the vast number of our sins. Six, it was given to establish our guilt. Chapter 3 in verse 19 before verse 20, it says this, “Now we know that whatsoever things the Law says to them who are under the Law that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may become guilty before God,” every mouth might be stopped. So it was not only given to reveal our sin, to increase our sin, but to show that we were guilty and, therefore, worthy to did.

I read the passage in Galatians 3:23 and 24, there it was stated that the Law was a slave guardian to the time of Christ. What was a slave guardian? Well a slave guardian, Authorized Version translates a school master, that's not quite accurate. A slave guardian, the slave guardian was a person who was hired by a fairly well to do Roman to take charge of his child during the ages in which we was growing up. And so the slave guardian often a Greek, the Romans thought a lot of the Greeks, in fact, they thought so much of the Greeks that their language became very much like the Greek language. If you study both Latin and Greek then you know that if you studied Greek first when you study Latin, Latin is easy. If you study Latin first as I did for four years before I even studied Greek, Greek was very easy. The Latin, the Romans thought a great deal of the Greeks for a perfectly good reason. The Greeks were intellectuals. And, furthermore, we

even think like the Greeks today. Every time your little child is taught to say “why, why, how,” he’s thinking like a Greek. He’s not thinking like a Hebrew, not thinking like a Persian, he’s thinking like a Greek. They were trained in the philosophical method. People often say that when you talk about Systematic Theology you are talking about Greek things or Hellenistic things. Well you cannot understand the New Testament if you don’t think like that because the apostles do that as well. That’s very important. So the slave guardians took the little kids and they taught them, taught them Greek as well as taught them the things that they needed in order to prepare them for life in the family and in the society. And then at a certain age the little Roman boy would take off one toga which signified his immaturity and put on another toga and then he was an adopted son; that is he became a full-fledged son and entered into the relationship of the family and had a vote in the family council. In a sense, he had grown up.

It’s very much like certain people today have a similar kind of thing. The Jews for example have Bar Mitzvah’s that’s the same kind of thing. So the Law was a slave guardian to educate the children until sonship came through the coming of the Redeemer. Therefore, the Law performed an educational purpose. It taught believing Israelites the nature of the holiness and the righteousness of God and that’s very important. And if we take the view that we are not under the Law as a code, we should never take the view that the Law is not a most profitable for our study and most accurate revelation of the nature and character of God. When a man breaks a Mosaic Law, he’s not walking by the Holy Spirit. I except only one thing and that is the question of the observance of the Sabbath Day. But when it comes to the moral requirements of the Mosaic Law, the moral requirements of the Mosaic Law are a good test of whether a man is walking by the Spirit. That’s what Paul says when he says the fruit of the Spirit is this, this, this, this non virtues and then he says “against such there is no law.” Further he says “the man who walks by the Spirit will fulfill the righteous requirement of the Law,” Romans, chapter 8, verse 3 and verse 4.

Finally, the Law bore witness prophetically and typically to the salvation in Christ. In Romans chapter 3 in verse 21, the apostle says, “But now the righteousness of God without the Law is manifested being witnessed by the Law and the prophets.” So the Law gave testimony to the righteousness of God in Christ. Where did it give testimony? Well most fully in the levitical ceremony, in the offering, in the priesthood, in the covenants, and the confirmation of the covenants in sacrifice. So sacrifice and priesthood offering. These are the ways in which the ministry of the Lord Jesus was foreshadowed in the Old Testament. One book in the New Testament spells out the details Hebrews chapter 10, or Hebrews and specifically Hebrews chapter 10, in which the author of that epistle makes that very point. He says, and with this I will close for our time is up, “For the Law having a shadow of good things to come and not the very image of the things can never with those sacrifices which they offer year by year continually make the comers there unto perfect. For then would they not a feast to be offered. Because that the worshipers once purges should have had no more conscience of sin. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sin every year, for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin.”

So even in the ceremonial observances which pointed forward to Christ, there was an evidence of the sin of man unfolding. How? Because it had to be repeated every year. The fact that they were repeated every year was evidence that the sacrifices of the Mosaic system could not cover sin. For every time they would observe the Day of Atonement a thinking Israelite would say, “we still are sinners, we’ll have to do this again next year.” So what Paul says very plain “by the Law is the knowledge of sin,” the epistle to the Hebrews says it is also revealed in the ceremony of the Old Testament. But the ceremony in their sacrifice and priesthood pointed forward to the one who would come as the priest and offer the sacrifice whereby man may be saved.

If you are here tonight and have never believed in Christ you don’t have salvation but if by God’s grace you see your need through the Law and you flee to Christ you will

have by the gift of grace forgiveness of sins. May God enable you to come to Christ for that if you don't know him.

Let's bow in a moment [End of Tape]